

Head Quarters 1st Division 19th A.C.

Franklin, La. February 1st 1864

My Dear Sister,

I hardly know what excuse to make for being so delinquent in writing to you, not only to you in particular, but to almost every body else, except dear mother and I do not write to her as often as I ~~ought~~ ought to.

I would not have you think because I have not written to you oftener, that I have forgotten you, or have been unmindful of you in the least, for I am sure such thoughts would be entirely void, and I trust that you harbor no such thoughts, the fact of it is that I am no letter writer any more than father is.

It is an awful hard task for me to sit down and write a letter, which had ought to be a pleasure to me instead of dreading it as bad as I used to my Algebra recitation to Miss Bower.

You probably have had a good long visit with Harrison long before this time, and he has told all about us, and how we got along so there would be no use of my writing it. Trust that I was there with him. I believe we could have a good time, but never mind I have but a year and a half longer to work for "Uncle Sam" and then, if I live *untill* then I will be home for good.

I should like very well to be there now to take a sleigh ride or go skating on the pond, some of these moonlights nights as I used to, but [?] what's the use of thinking about such things as long as I have got to stay here, I may as well be contented as any other way.

I see by your letter that you have got a wrong idea about my looks, your dreams turn out about as all dreams do, right the opposite exactly.

Instead of my looking as you describe in your dream I am looking better, healthier, and fleshier, than you ever saw me before, unless it was when I was small. I cannot call my self very small now, for I think I am the largest one of the family, I am nearly two inches taller now than I was when enlisted, that's all owing to the good victuals we get I suppose, such as "hard tack", "salt-horse", etc. I have no fault to find my living at present, nor have I had at any time, but I have wished a great many times to get a cold bite out of mother's cupboard, there is seven of us here clerks & orderlies, we have a

darky to cook for us and have a large tent to set the table in, and we have plenty to put upon, such as it is, so we can find no fault for it is a great deal better than I used to get when with the company.

My duty is very light. I have hardly enough to do for my own good.

I heard that Uncle Sam had gone home on a furlough, I don't know whether it is true or not. I hope so, for he never was fit for a soldier and never will be, the last time I saw him ~~we~~ he was looking very bad indeed.

The steamboat ~~is~~ has just got through whistling away down the bayou, to let us know that she is *comming*, we probably will get a mail. I hope so for it is time I got a letter from home, I have not got any the last two mails.

Well Lute, I think I have written quite a long letter for me and it is getting about bed time so I will adjourn.

From your Affect. Brother,

J. F. Brand

Give my love to all.